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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 09/697,465 | 10/26/2000 | Ronnal P. Reichard | 5785-23 | 4519 |

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08/25/2003

Robert J Sacco
Akerman Senterfitt & Eidson P A
222 Lakeview Avenue
Post Office Box 3188A
West Palm Beach, FL 33402-3188

EXAMINER

KUHNS, ALLAN R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1732

DATE MAILED: 08/25/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/697,465

Applicant(s)

REICHARD ET AL.

Examiner

KUHN S

Group Art Unit

1732

— The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address —

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE THREE(3) MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on JUNE 11, 2003

☐ This action is FINAL.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

☒ Claim(s) 21-35 AND 37-55 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☒ Claim(s) 40-55 is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) 21, 25-28, 30-35 AND 37 is/are rejected.

☒ Claim(s) 22-24, 29 AND 38-39 is/are objected to.

☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement

Application Papers

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the:

☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received

in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a))

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☒ Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Other _____

Office Action Summary

Art Unit: 1732

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 21, 25-28, 30-35 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Forster et al. (5,580,502). Forster et al. disclose the basic claimed method of forming a relatively high strength panel including positioning a first fabric layer opposite a second fabric layer to form opposed panel surfaces (column 8, lines 3-39), fixing a foam core between at least a portion of the fabric layers to form the panel, and selectively positioning at least one rigid load bearing member between portions of the foam core. Since the densified segment described in Forster et al. at column 7, lines 1-30 is provided as a stiffening member for the composite, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that such a member would also be capable of providing greater resistance to point compression based on its enhanced stiffness.

Forster et al. teach the injection of a foam core between first and second fabric layers, as in claim 37, at column 6, line 33. Forster et al. teach or suggest the positioning and selecting aspects of claims 25 and 27-28, although the elongated channel of claim 26 is not required to be selected by the instant claim language. Forster et al. also teach or suggest the constraining step of claim 30 and the fabric or fiber selections of claims 31-35.

3. Claims 40-55 are allowed.

Art Unit: 1732

4. Claims 22-24, 29 and 38-39 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, claims 38-39 appear to be duplicates of claims 54 and 55, respectively.

5. Applicants' arguments filed June 11, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicants' arguments are considered to be moot by the examiner based on the revised ground of rejection introduced in this Office action.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Allan Kuhns whose telephone number is (703) 308-3462. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 7:00 to 5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Colaianni, can be reached on (703) 305-5493. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 305-7718.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

Allan R. Kuhns

ALLAN R. KUHNS
PRIMARY EXAMINER AU 1732

8-20-03